

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 392

August 10, 1995, 10:27 p.m.
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DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS/ASAT Anti-Satellite Program

SUBJECT: Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1996 . . . S. 1087. Stevens motion to table the Harkin amendment No. 2402.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 57-41

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1087, the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1996, will appropriate \$242.7 billion for the military functions of the Department of Defense for fiscal year 1996, which is \$6.4 billion more than requested and \$2.3 billion less than the fiscal year (FY) 1995 funding level.

The Harkin amendment would strike \$30 million appropriated for Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation, Defense-Wide, with the intention of striking funding for the ASAT Anti-Satellite Program.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. Following debate, Senator Stevens moved to table the Harkin amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

The \$30 million in funding for antisatellite research is a contingency program. No plan exists for building a system; the purpose is to develop the technology in case it is needed in the future. The core of the argument of our colleagues against ever building such a defensive weapon is that it will result in rubble in space. We do not find this argument persuasive. If the United States ever finds that it absolutely needs to use this technology as its only workable defense against enemy satellites, we are very willing to accept the corollary result that there will be rubble in space that could accidentally damage or destroy commercial satellites. The alternative of not having any effective defense, and of suffering massive battlefield and civilian losses as a consequence, is not an acceptable alternative.

Our colleagues are wrong to assume that the United States will never need an ASAT weapon. Satellite technology is proliferating rapidly. It is sold commercially and the massive decontrol of recent years has made numerous advanced sensing and reconnaissance

(See other side)

YEAS (57)			NAYS (41)			NOT VOTING (2)	
Republicans (51 or 96%)	Democrats (6 or 13%)		Republicans (2 or 4%)	Democrats (39 or 87%)		Republicans (1)	Democrats (1)
Abraham	Helms	Ford	Hatfield	Akaka	Johnston	Mack- ²	Bradley- ⁴
Ashcroft	Hutchison	Heflin	Jeffords	Baucus	Kennedy		
Bennett	Inhofe	Hollings		Biden	Kerrey		
Bond	Kassebaum	Inouye		Bingaman	Kerry		
Brown	Kempthorne	Lieberman		Boxer	Kohl		
Burns	Kyl	Nunn		Breaux	Lautenberg		
Campbell	Lott			Bryan	Leahy		
Chafee	Lugar			Bumpers	Levin		
Coats	McCain			Byrd	Mikulski		
Cochran	McConnell			Conrad	Moseley-Braun		
Cohen	Murkowski			Daschle	Moynihan		
Coverdell	Nickles			Dodd	Murray		
Craig	Packwood			Dorgan	Pell		
D'Amato	Pressler			Exon	Pryor		
DeWine	Roth			Feingold	Reid		
Dole	Santorum			Feinstein	Robb		
Domenici	Shelby			Glenn	Rockefeller		
Faircloth	Simpson			Graham	Sarbanes		
Frist	Smith			Harkin	Simon		
Gorton	Snowe				Wellstone		
Gramm	Specter						
Grams	Stevens						
Grassley	Thomas						
Gregg	Thompson						
Hatch	Thurmond						
	Warner						

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

capabilities readily available. China, Russia, France, Italy, Spain, and Israel have satellite reconnaissance capabilities, and India, Japan, North Korea, and other countries are moving toward such a capability. Additionally, enemy satellites could be used to deny the United States the use of space by generating atmospheric disturbances that would disrupt its military communications system. Other approaches our colleagues have mentioned, such as creating false signals to confuse enemy satellites, might prove to be all we need as a defense, but then again they might not. We should develop all our options and deploy the ones that work as needed against the threats that emerge. We should not start research only once a threat emerges, and force the United States to face danger until such time as a defense is developed. The Harkin amendment would block basic research that someday may be vital to protect the United States or its troops in battle. We therefore strongly urge our colleagues to join us in tabling this amendment.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

Both the former Soviet Union and the United States have conducted anti-satellite tests in space. Rubble from those tests is still orbiting the earth at 17,000 miles per hour. That rubble poses a serious danger to any satellites or space travelers who may be unlucky enough to get in its path. If there were a large-scale war and numerous satellites were destroyed, vast areas of space would be so littered with rubble that they would be unusable for decades or even hundreds of years. It might make sense to pursue this technology if there were not any alternative ways of combating enemy satellites. However, there are two such ways. First, their signals can be jammed electronically. Second, they can be fed false signals. These ways are much cheaper and are extremely effective. We think the United States should rely on its electronic capabilities instead of pursuing ASAT weaponry. Accordingly, we oppose the motion to table.